



Town of Voluntown – Affordable Housing Plan

Public Information Session

May 4, 2022

What are Affordable Housing Plans?

(1) Not later than June 1, 2022, and at least once every five years thereafter, each municipality shall prepare or amend and adopt an affordable housing plan for the municipality and shall submit a copy of such plan to the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management, who shall post such plan on the Internet web site of said office. Such plan shall specify how the municipality intends to increase the number of affordable housing developments in the municipality.

(2) If, at the same time the municipality is required to submit to the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management an affordable housing plan pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection, the municipality is also required to submit to the secretary a plan of conservation and development pursuant to section 8-23, such affordable housing plan may be included as part of such plan of conservation and development. The municipality may, to coincide with its submission to the secretary of a plan of conservation and development, submit to the secretary an affordable housing plan early, provided the municipality's next such submission of an affordable housing plan shall be five years thereafter.

(b) The municipality may hold public informational meetings or organize other activities to inform residents about the process of preparing the plan and shall post a copy of any draft plan or amendment to such plan on the Internet web site of the municipality. If the municipality holds a public hearing, such posting shall occur at least thirty-five days prior to the public hearing. After adoption of the plan, the municipality shall file the final plan in the office of the town clerk of such municipality and post the plan on the Internet web site of the municipality.

(c) Following adoption, the municipality shall regularly review and maintain such plan. The municipality may adopt such geographical, functional or other amendments to the plan or parts of the plan, in accordance with the provisions of this section, as it deems necessary. If the municipality fails to amend and submit to the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management such plan every five years, the chief elected official of the municipality shall submit a letter to the secretary that (1) explains why such plan was not amended, and (2) designates a date by which an amended plan shall be submitted.

What is Affordable Housing?

Simply put – allowing for residents to find suitable housing opportunities that they can afford and not spend more than 30% of their income on housing costs.



What is Affordable Housing?

Capital-A “Affordable”:

8-30g – Affordable Housing Appeals Act

- 10% threshold to be subject
- CHFA/USDA mortgages
- Income restricted (40 years)
- Incentive Housing (30 years)
- Government Assisted (Senior/Disabled)
- Tenant Rental Assistance



Small-a “affordable”:

“Naturally-Occurring Affordable Housing” – NOAH

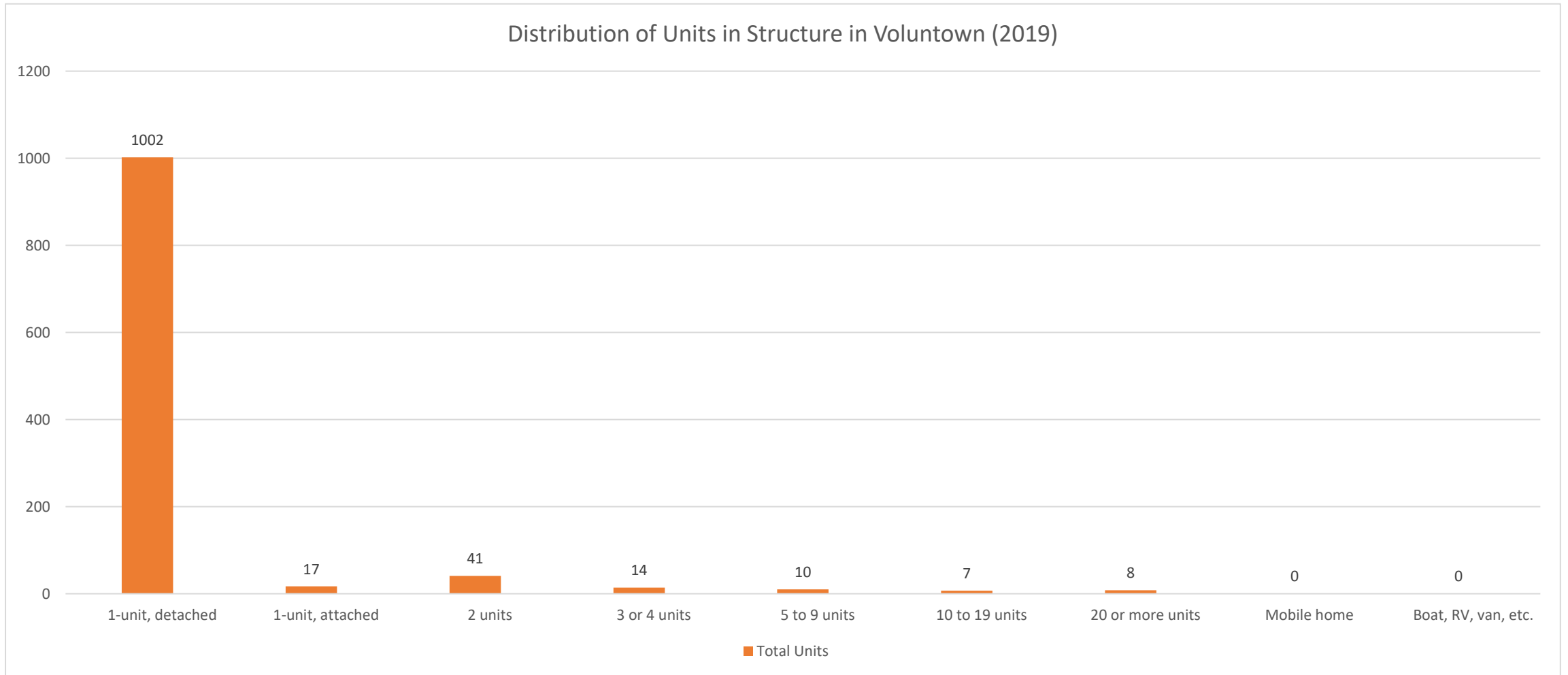
- Accessory Apartments/Duplex
- Accessory Dwelling Units/Cottages
- Studio/One-Bedroom
- Rents at or below median income affordability



Voluntown's Approach

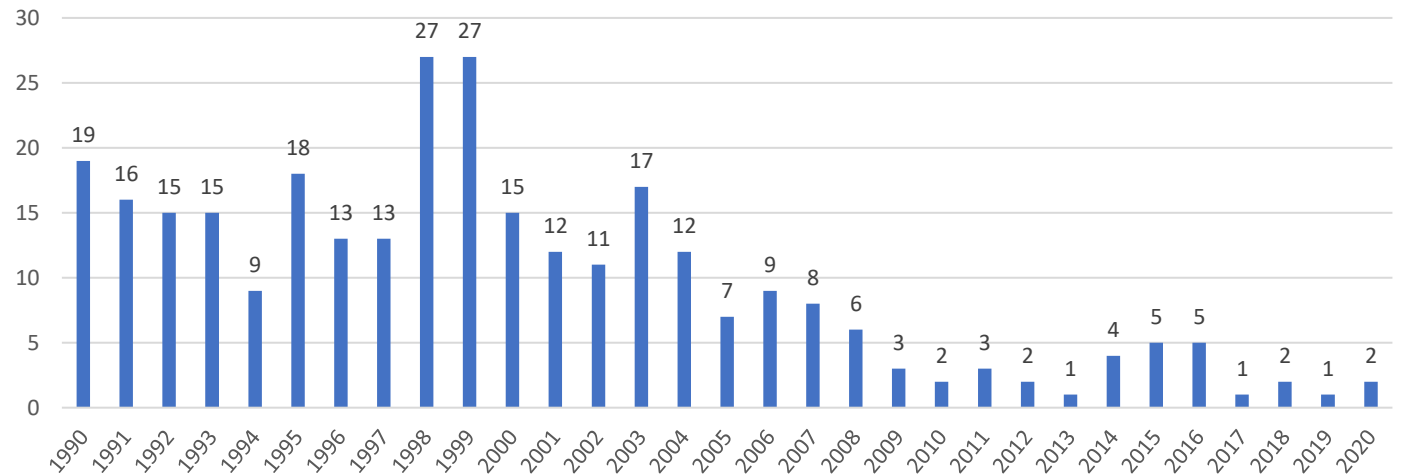
- Process Led by Ad-Hoc Committee Established by BOS
- Coordinated by Town Planner & Consulting Team
- Focus on achievable actions and Voluntown-specific needs for next five years

Voluntown's Housing Situation

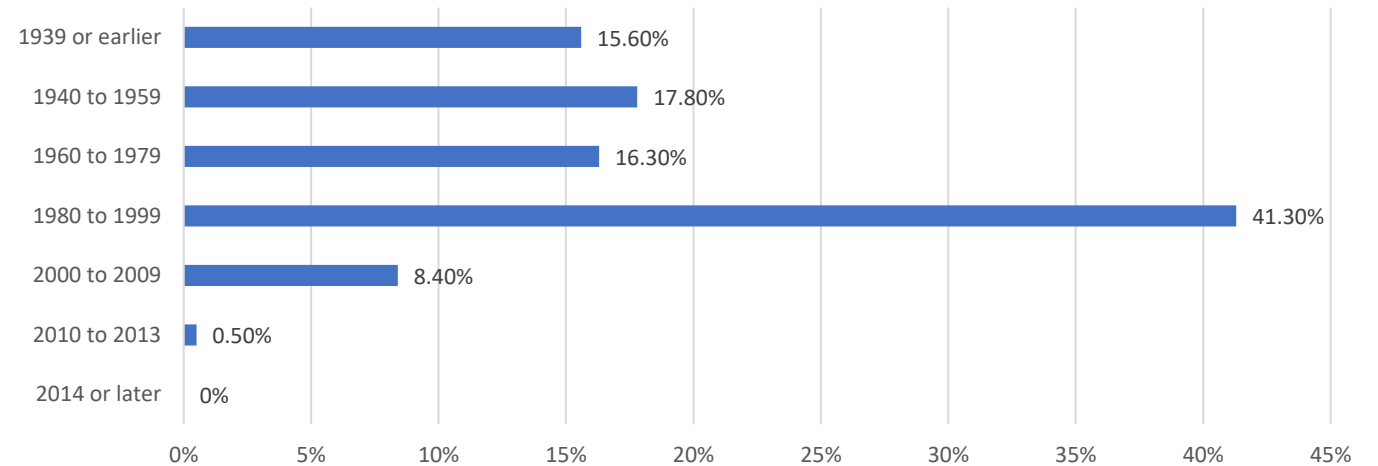


Voluntown's Housing Situation

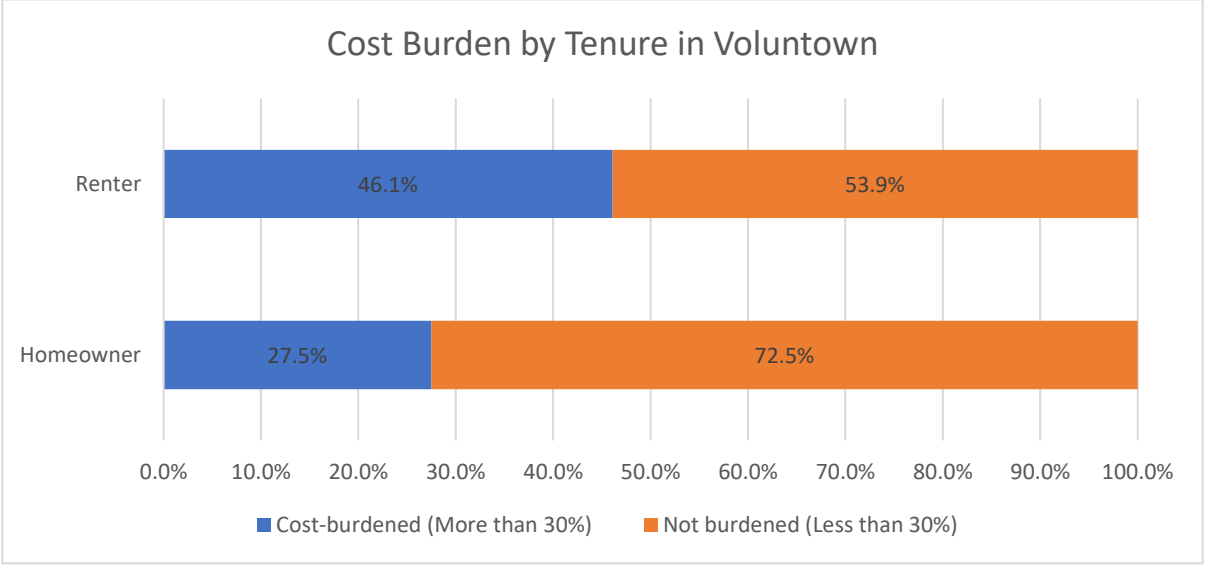
Building Permits Issued Per Year in Voluntown



Year Residential Structures Built in Voluntown

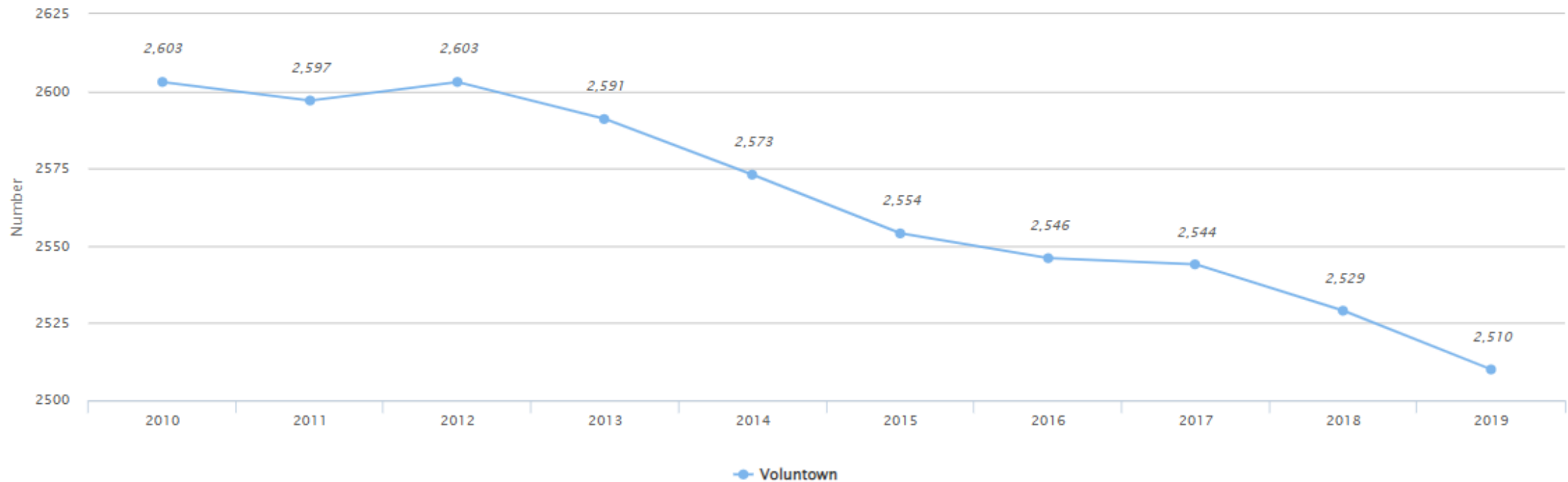


	Number of Units
Gov assisted	20
Tenant Rental Assistance	1
Single Family CHFA/USDA Mortgages	22
Deed Restricted Units	0
Total Assisted	43 (3.82% of all housing units in Voluntown)



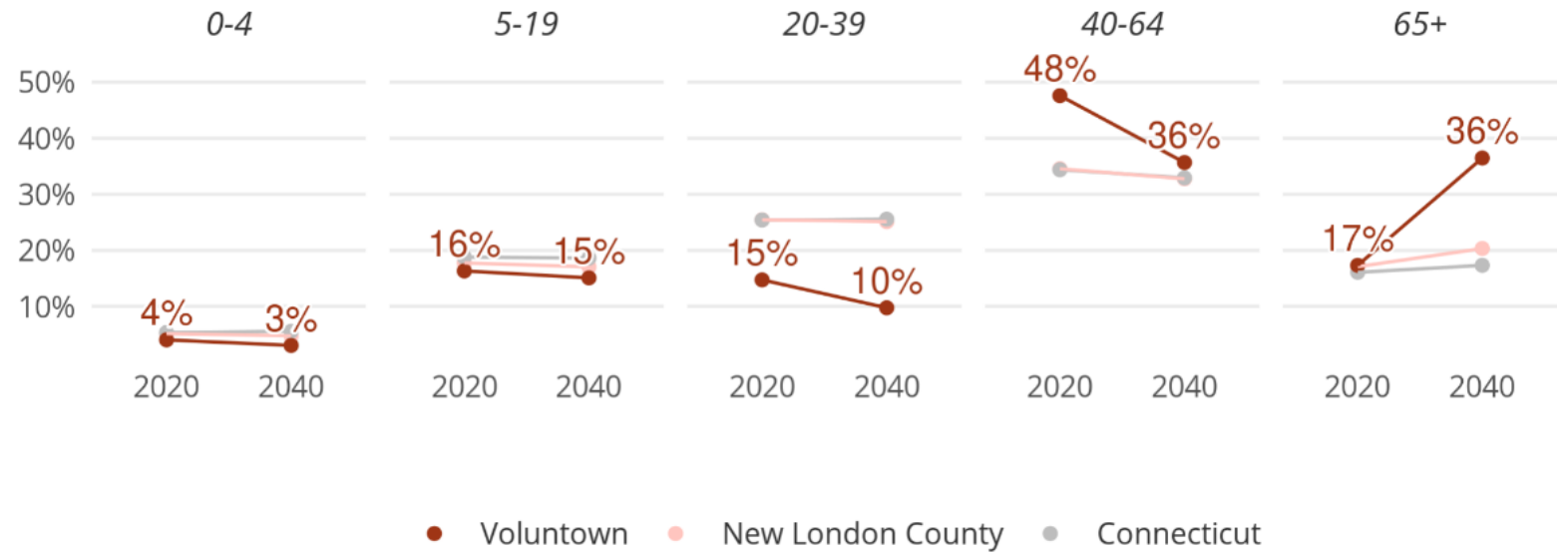
Example: 2 Bedroom Unit and 4-person household	Total/Year	Total/Month
Area Median Income (AMI)	\$88,600	\$7,383
<i>Median income level per household in the surrounding market/area</i>		
80% of AMI	\$70,880	\$5,907
<i>80% of median income listed above</i>		
30% of 80% of the AMI	\$21,264	\$1,772
<i>Maximum non-burdened budget for living</i>		
HUD 2021 Fair Market Rate , 2BR in Norwich-New London, CT HUD Metro FMR Area = \$1,772		

Voluntown's Population

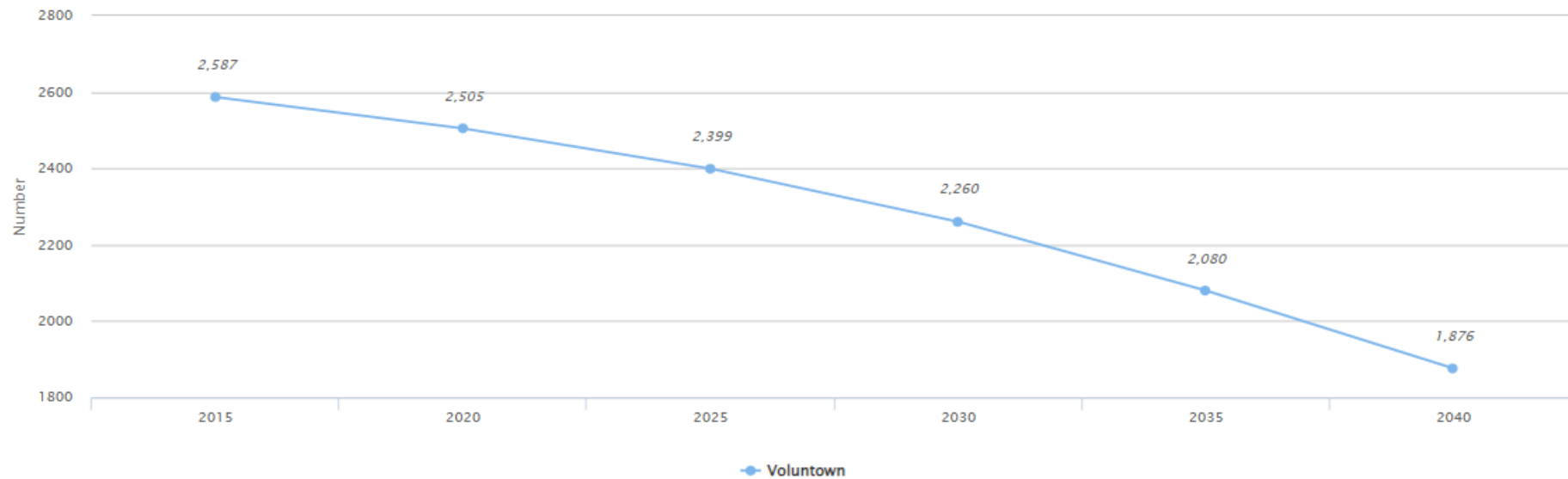


Source: . CTData.org

Voluntown's Population



Source: Connecticut Data Center



Source: . CTData.org

PoCD and Zoning Regulation Review

Voluntown, Connecticut Plan of Conservation and Development 2020-2030



Adopted December 19, 2019

Effective February 2, 2020



Topic	Relevance	Regulation	Observation
Residential Density	Increased density allows for more housing units on a given parcel of land increasing financial viability and lowering costs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All residential districts (Rural District & Village District) allow both single- and two-family dwellings.• Rural District minimum lot size for single family is 80,000 sq ft. Minimum lot size for two family is 140,000 square feet• Village District minimum lot size for single family is 30,000. 40,000 for two family.• Family apartments are allowed in all residential districts	Minimum lot sizes in the Rural District are generally large, falling short of 2 acres for a single family home. Although the Town's PoCD justifies this large minimum lot size on the basis of septic/well requirements, this is larger than is really necessary. The Town could consider techniques like soil-based zoning or decreasing minimum lot sizes to allow smaller and cheaper residential development.
Multifamily Housing	Multi-family development is traditionally the best pathway toward increasing affordable housing by virtue of unit size and density. Housing trends indicate that not all in search of housing want or can afford a single family detached home. 91% of the Town's housing stock is comprised of SFD's so regulations to encourage alternative housing types are important.	Allowed in Village District by special exception	The Town could allow smaller-scale multifamily (3-4) units as of right on lots that can support the infrastructure required.



Recommended Actions

- **Policy #1: Make improvements to Voluntown's administrative systems that facilitate housing development and provide ease of access to resources**
- Create a webpage as part of Voluntown's main website that provides resources and links to information on housing in Town
- Designate a municipal official as an affordable housing "point person" who coordinates with other municipal staff to help implement Affordable Housing Plan goals
- Promote, through the real estate and lending community, homebuying funding programs through USDA and CHFA

Recommended Actions

- **Policy #2: Make modifications to Voluntown's Zoning Regulations that promote housing opportunities in town.**
 - Allow multi-family housing up to 4 units per lot in Village District as-of-right
 - Allow elderly or age-restricted housing in all residential districts as-of-right
 - Adopt an Inclusionary Zoning regulation per CGS Section 8-2i, including a Housing Trust Fund for new multiple dwelling developments



Recommended Actions

- **Policy #3: Make town-wide commitments to furthering affordable housing options for residents, particularly senior citizens**
 - Pursue partnerships with affordable housing and senior housing developers
 - Actively seek funding for senior housing expansion
 - Promote accessory dwelling units by providing information online and user-friendly resources for property owners



Implementation

Action	Responsibility	Priority & Timeframe
Action 1.1 – Create a webpage as part of Voluntown’s main website that provides resources and links to information on housing in Town.	Town Staff	High – Year 1
Action 1.2 – Designate a municipal official as an affordable housing “point person” who coordinates with other municipal staff to help implement Voluntown’s affordable housing goals.	Board of Selectmen/Town Staff	High – Year 1
Action 1.3 - Promote, through the real estate and lending community, homebuying funding programs through USDA, CHFA, and municipal staff	Town Staff/Board of Selectmen	Moderate – Year 1 and ongoing
Action 2.1 - Allow Multifamily housing up to 4 units per lot in Village District as of right	Planning and Zoning Commission	Moderate – Year 2-4
Action 2.2 - Allow elderly/age-restricted housing in all residential districts as of right	Planning and Zoning Commission	Moderate – Year 1-3
Action 2.3 – Adopt an Inclusionary Zoning regulation per CGS Section 8-2i. including a Housing Trust Fund for new multiple dwelling developments	Planning and Zoning Commission / Board of Selectmen	High – Year 1-3
Action 3.1 – Pursue partnerships with affordable housing and senior housing developers	Board of Selectmen / Town Staff	High – Years 1-5
Action 3.2 - Actively seek funding for senior housing expansion	Town Staff	Moderate – Year 1 and ongoing
Action 3.3 - Promote accessory dwelling units by providing information online and user-friendly resources for property owners.	Town Staff	High – Year 1

The background of the slide is a faded, grayscale image. On the right side, there is a tall, modern building with many windows. On the left side, there is a waterfall cascading over rocks, with lush green trees and foliage surrounding it.

QUESTIONS & COMMENTS

planner@voluntown.gov